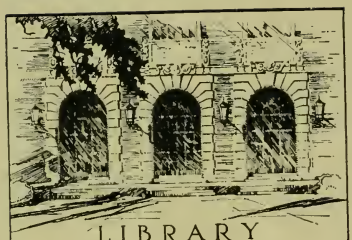

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THE TRUTH

ABOUT

THE TRANSVAAL.

BY THE

Rt. HON. LORD BRABOURNE.

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THE TRUTH ABOUT THE TRANSVAAL.

Mr. Chamberlain's speech, recently delivered at Birmingham, and containing a defence of the Transvaal policy of the present Government, has been printed for general circulation. A defence of the same policy, by Mr. Craig Sellar, has already been circulated in Scotland, so that what may be called the Boer side of the question is fully before the British public. This being the case, it has been thought desirable that the British side should be also stated clearly and impartially, so that the public may be able to judge for itself whether the Government are really entitled to the praise which they claim for "moral courage" in their abandonment of the Transvaal, and whether "justice" really required that the flag of England should be lowered before insurgent enemies, that British soldiers should be massacred not only unavenged, but without even a word of protest on the part of the British Government, that the plighted word of that Government to loyal colonists should be broken, and the confidence hitherto placed, both by men of white and black descent, in the power and good faith of Great Britain, rudely shaken, if not entirely destroyed. Mr. Sellar, after stating with perfect truth that "the Transvaal is an enormous territory, about the size of England, Scotland, and Ireland in a ring fence," goes on to say that the Boers, "trekking from Cape Colony and Natal to escape from British dominion," crossed the Vaal, occupied this huge territory, considered that they held the Transvaal by the same right by which we hold India Canada, and other possessions, the right, namely, of conquest; and their independence was guaranteed to them by what is called the Sand River Convention, which was agreed to in 1852. With reference to these statements, it should never be forgotten that the main reason which induced the Dutch Boers to "trek" from Cape Colony in 1835 was the abolition of slavery by Great Britain, and their desire to maintain slavery as one of their institutions, which they could not be allowed to do as British subjects. This fact has been often denied by the advocates of the Boers in this country; but even if their simple denial could be accepted against the overwhelm-

ing mass of evidence on the other side, the truth may be gathered from recent publications of the insurgent Boers themselves, who may be judged out of their own mouths. In Blue Book C. 2866, presented to Parliament in April, 1881, at page 169 will be found a copy of the "Petition of Rights addressed to his Honour the President of the Orange Free State and the Honourable the Volksraad on the occasion of their special sitting on the 17th of February, 1881." This document is dated "South African Republic, Government House, Heidelberg, February 7th, 1881," and is signed "In the name of the Triumvirate, S. J. P. Kruger, Vice-President." It contains among other things a statement which every Englishman who values the Colonial Empire of Great Britain will do well to bear in mind, inasmuch as it shows that the ultimate aim of the rebel Boers is not only to possess the Transvaal, but to banish English influence altogether from South Africa, which indeed they claim to hold as "Africa for the Africanders." This statement is that "in the cession of the Cape of Good Hope by the King of Holland to England upon the fall of Napoleon I. lies the root of the evil out of which subsequent events and our present struggle have grown," and it goes on to state that "the great exodus from the Colony is of later date subsequent to 1834, when, *owing to the forced liberation of the slaves*, our old patriarchal farms were suddenly ruined." The truth is that these men, of whom Mr. Chamberlain tells us that "they are animated by a deep and *somewhat stern religious sentiment*," and that they have an "*unconquerable love of freedom and of liberty*," are not prevented by the first from loving the last only when enjoyed by themselves, and denying either "liberty" or "freedom" to those nations whom they consider born to slavery. As their love for slavery, and desire to treat the native races in a manner which British humanity could not tolerate, lay at the root of the determination of the Boers to reject British dominion, so the same feelings have prevailed amongst them ever since, and have been mainly instrumental in causing the state of anarchy, confusion, and perpetual warfare between black and white men which really brought about the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877. If their denial of slave-practices be true, whence did it arise that in the Sand River Convention of 1852, which the Boers quote as their Charter of Independence, it was thought necessary to insert a special provision that "No slavery is or shall be permitted or practised to the north of the Vaal by the emigrant farmers?" There is overwhelming proof that this provision was constantly violated by the Boers; the Blue Books presented to Parliament absolutely teem with such proof, gathered from the writings of Dr. Livingstone, the letters of Mr. Chesson (Secretary to the Aborigines Protection Society), the independent colonial press, the frequent reports of British officials in the Colonies, the solemn resolutions of the Natal Legislature in 1868, and the reiterated and piteous complaints of the native tribes themselves. This evidence was

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brought to the notice of the House of Lords on Feb. 21st, 1881, when the Earl of Kimberley agreed that "irrefutable evidence has been brought forward to show that, whether or not with the direct countenance, at least without being prevented by the Government of the Transvaal Republic, the Boers did, in many instances, violate that provision of the Convention." Lord Kimberley, however, went on to say that "these transactions, for the most part, took place a considerable time ago," and that although isolated instances of slavery had doubtless occurred, he believed that of late years the Boer Government was not so much to be blamed. Being pressed, however, for the evidence upon which he made a statement so contrary to the facts disclosed by the Blue Books, Lord Kimberley simply relied upon a statement made in a letter to Lord Carnarvon by the Boer President Burghers himself, of which it may be said that to accept as conclusive, against a mass of documentary evidence, the unsupported statement *of one of the accused parties*, is a course as contrary to the procedure of a Law Court as it is repugnant to common sense. The best proof, however, of the truth of the charge against the Boers with regard to slavery is the intense hatred which is entertained towards them by the native races. This at least is a fact which cannot be denied, and a perusal of the following statements will show that for this feeling the Boers have given but too ample a justification. Mr. Sellar continues by saying that "from 1852 to 1877 the task of governing these Boers was undertaken by a central Boer authority." This is not quite correct, and it is well to be accurate upon these points. There was no recognition of any South African Republic by the Sand River Convention, nor could there have been, since no such Republic existed. All that was done by that Convention was to guarantee to the emigrant farmers, on the part of the British Government, "the right to manage their own affairs and to govern themselves without any interference on the part of Her Majesty's Government," "*it being understood that this system of non-interference is binding upon both parties.*" For some years after 1852 the "emigrant farmers" divided themselves into three separate Republics, and no attempt was made to establish any union until 1858. Indeed, Lord Kimberley stated, in the debate already referred to, that the so-called South African Republic continued to consist of three different portions up to 1865, and he contended that "the trade in black ivory"—that is, the enslaving of native children—was practised in one of these only to any extent. In any case, Mr. Sellar is perfectly correct when he goes on to say "the Boers would acknowledge no authority. If the law was obnoxious to any class of men, they either threatened the Legislature into rescinding it, or they defied the Executive to put it into force. *They refused to pay any taxes, or to come under the responsibility of any form of government.*" Unfortunately, this dislike to and refusal of "any form of Government"

upon the part of the inhabitants of any country produces a spirit of lawlessness, and brings about consequences which cannot be confined to their own community. This, too, is especially the case in a country situated as is the Transvaal. Unrestrained by the laws which would have prevailed among a more civilised people, the Boers from 1852 up to 1877 were constantly engaged either in civil war among themselves or in conflicts with the numerous native tribes whose children they sought to enslave and whose lands they desired to appropriate to themselves. By the continual and cruel inroads of the Boers upon these natives, the "system of non-interference" made binding by the Sand River Convention was practically violated as much as the provision against slavery. For these natives were in many instances the neighbours and kin of the native population dwelling in British territory, and, apart from all questions of justice and humanity, the British Government could not afford to tolerate the constant kindling of warlike and hostile feelings among the native tribes which might at any moment culminate in a war of races, the result of which could not but be widely disastrous to the best interests of civilisation. That such a state of things had really been reached in 1876-7 may be proved from the mouth of President Burghers himself, whose speeches to the Volksraad absolutely demolish the pretence lately put forward that the Transvaal Boers could have "pulled through" the difficulties by which they were surrounded at that time. Upon this particular point the President said with regard to England: "It is asked, what have they to do with our position? I tell you, as much as we have to do with that of our Kaffir neighbours. As little as we can allow barbarities among the Kaffirs on our borders, so little can they allow that in a state on their borders anarchy and rebellion should exist." It is beyond all doubt that "anarchy and rebellion" did exist in the Transvaal in the spring of 1877, and that there appeared no prospect of a better state of things. The taxes were not paid, the law was utterly disregarded, the treasury was empty, the administration had practically disappeared, and savage tribes were threatening the country with no doubtful voice. What, then, was the duty of England? Mr. Sellar, writing as a political partisan, tells us that our Colonial Minister, Lord Carnarvon, had a "forward policy" in South Africa, just as Lord Salisbury in India, and that "as Lord Salisbury found an agent in Lord Lytton to carry out his policy, so Lord Carnarvon found an agent in Mr. Shepstone, *who was knighted as a prospective honour attaching to the instrument who accomplished this achievement of annexation.*" The attempt here made to confound Lord Carnarvon's policy in South Africa with that of Lord Salisbury in India is as absurd as it is unfair. Lord Salisbury may have been quite right or quite wrong in India, but the circumstances of the two cases are entirely different, and each must be judged upon its own merits. Moreover, since Sir Theophilus Shepstone had been a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George since 1869, and had for *forty years*

served the British Government with zeal and fidelity, his promotion to the rank of Knight-Commander of the same Order in 1876 was a natural and well-deserved reward for past services, and to insinuate that this was given as a "prospective" honour, *i.e.*, to induce Sir Theophilus to carry out a particular policy, is both disingenuous and unjust. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was sent to the Transvaal not because Lord Carnarvon desired "confederation" (although such a desire had long been felt by many of the best friends of South Africa), but because the reports from the Transvaal had become so alarming, and the evil-doings of the Boers towards the natives had rendered the state of the relations between white and black so critical, that it was as if a house was on fire next door to us, in the flames of which we might have been at any moment enveloped. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was more respected by the native tribes and knew more of their habits and feelings than probably any other man in South Africa. He became aware of the increasing anxiety of Cetewayo, the great Zulu King, to "wash his spears in the blood of the Dutch Boers:" he knew that if Cetewayo should move, the signal would be given for that most terrible of all wars—a war of races—and he judged the condition of the Transvaal Government to be desperate. Not with any view to the aggrandisement of Great Britain, not from ambitious motives, but rather from motives of philanthropy and a desire to avert great and too surely impending calamity, not only from the Transvaal but from the neighbouring British Colonies, Sir Theophilus determined upon annexation, and for the same wise and just reasons the British Government approved of his determination. The affair was not done in a corner, nor was it a precipitate step. Sir Theophilus arrived in the Transvaal in January; the annexation was proclaimed upon the 12th April. It is quite true that a formal protest was made against it by President Burghers on behalf of the Transvaal Republic, but it is difficult to believe that the protest was intended to be more than formal. If the Republican Executive had possessed the smallest power or stability, they would hardly have permitted themselves to be deposed by Sir Theophilus Shepstone and twenty-five policemen, which was the amount of his force. But, being utterly paralysed and broken down, they not only submitted with something more than readiness, but large numbers of their officials continued to hold their offices under the British Government and took the Oath of Allegiance to the Queen. Among this number must be included Jorisson, who has since figured as a leader among the rebel Boers.

It is now alleged that Sir T. Shepstone deceived the Home Government, or was deceived himself, as to the amount of opposition to annexation which existed on the part of the Boers in 1877.

But it must be recollected that those who make these allegations are precisely those who are interested in justifying the Boer rebellion against British rule by showing that they had never given it their willing acquiescence. The facts are that in the towns of the

Transvaal, wherein reside the more civilised portion of the community, the desire was strong for that British rule which alone appeared likely to procure for the country order and good government. The farmers who were scattered throughout the country, and who understood by "independence" the non-payment of taxes, wished neither for British nor for any other rule, and it has been upon those ignorant and credulous men that interested agitators have been able to work with but too much success. At the time of annexation, however, there is little doubt that public feeling in the Transvaal approved of the action of Sir T. Shepstone. He himself says that every effort was at that time made to stir up the Boers against him "by inflammatory language in printed manifestoes," but in vain. His proclamation in Pretoria was received with hearty cheers for the Queen, whilst Mr. Burgher's protest was listened to with respectful silence. Moreover, within the next few weeks many hundreds of signatures were attached to addresses of approval of the step which had been taken and of loyalty to the Queen.

What, then, has caused the change, if change there has been, in the feelings of the Transvaal people? It is very probable that mistakes have been made in the administration of the province since 1877. The dislike of the Boers to military government has not been sufficiently understood and appreciated. There has also been an unfortunate delay in establishing those free representative institutions which were promised at the time of annexation, and which were delayed by the wars with the natives which the previous policy of the Boer republic had made necessary. Meanwhile, those interested agitators who always opposed that annexation, which, establishing order and obedience to law, would soon have reduced them to their proper and natural insignificance, have not only been assisted in their continuous work of disloyalty by the circumstances above named, but have received great aid from two especial sources. First of all must be reckoned this fact, that whereas at the time of annexation the Zulu power was unbroken and other native tribes were threatening the very existence of the Republic, between 1877 and 1880 Cetewayo had been subdued and the other tribes overcome by British valour and the expenditure of British money. Gratitude is not a characteristic of the Dutch Boer, and when the danger no longer hung over his head, he was the more easily persuaded to rebel against the Government whose power was at the moment no longer necessary for his protection. Yet, in all probability, had the action of the British Government been consistently firm, and due encouragement given to loyal colonists, the discontent of the Boers would gradually have passed away and a future of prosperity have already commenced for the Transvaal. Unhappily, in the second place, the disloyal agitator found powerful auxiliaries where they should least have been expected. Mr. Courtney, the present Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, who had con-

sistently opposed the annexation in his place in Parliament, is known to have been in correspondence with the disaffected Boers, but as his letters have not been published, their purport can only be surmised. But in that which is popularly known as "the Mid-Lothian campaign," Mr. Gladstone, in order to damage the Government of Lord Beaconsfield, did not scruple to condemn in strong language the annexation of the Transvaal, declaring that "we, the free subjects of a Monarchy, had coerced the free subjects of a Republic," with other language but too well calculated to encourage the disaffected Boers to persevere in their agitation. *Let this be noted. Mr. Gladstone's speeches in the winter of 1879 were printed and circulated in South Africa in 1880. In the latter part of the same year the Boers broke out into open rebellion.*

Meanwhile, the general election of April, 1880, had taken place, and the orator of Mid-Lothian had become the Prime Minister of England with a large Parliamentary majority. Is it wonderful that the expectations of the Boers were greatly raised? We know this to be the fact from their address to Mr. Gladstone, published in the blue books; and if the disappointment of those expectations was the approximate cause of their open rebellion and the consequent loss of life, can the statesman who beyond all doubt encouraged those expectations, fairly cast upon other shoulders the responsibility for subsequent events?

It should here be stated that during the Parliamentary session of 1877, many discussions took place upon South African affairs, and one debate specially upon the subject of the annexation of the Transvaal. During these debates *Mr. Gladstone never opened his mouth to say one word against annexation.* Mr. Courtney, then a very recently elected member, was only supported by two or three of the Irish Home Rule Party, whilst the step taken by Lord Carnarvon was not only unopposed by any leading member of the Liberal Party, but was deliberately endorsed and approved by those who had represented the Colonial Department under Mr. Gladstone's former government. It is, therefore, an undoubted fact that the annexation was acquiesced in by the Liberals as a party, and that it is only due to subsequent events that they have discovered objections to it which were never before in their minds. Until and after the change of Government in April, 1880, the loyal portion of the inhabitants of the Transvaal were again and again assured by British officials of high rank that the Transvaal would certainly continue to be a part of Her Majesty's dominions; upon the faith of these assurances many men invested their money and settled in the Transvaal, and as late as the 8th June, 1880, Mr. Gladstone added to the assurances already given by a letter containing these words: "Our judgment is, that the Queen cannot be advised to relinquish her sovereignty over the Transvaal." And even after the rebellion had broken out, as late as January in the present year, the Government put in the mouth of the Sovereign,

in her Speech from the Throne, words which declared, in a proper, English, loyal spirit, that whilst anxious to give the freest possible institutions to the inhabitants of the Transvaal, Her Majesty's authority must first be vindicated, and order re-established in the country.

What, then, has caused the lamentable change in the policy of the Government? Mr. Sellar and other advocates of the Boers calmly tell us that Lord Carnarvon and Sir Michael Beach, the authorities and the people, both in the Colony and at home, were badly informed of the true state of feeling in the country; or, to put it in the words of the Boer speakers, "the officials of the Queen have, by their untrue and false representations, closed the door to Her Majesty and Parliament." To put the matter plainly, these anti-British writers and speakers, who glorify patriotism in everybody but a Briton, and can see no virtue save in the enemies of their country and those who sympathize with them, would have us believe that our British and Colonial authorities, from the highest to the lowest grade, have been guilty of falsehood and concealment, rather than that a number of Dutch Boers, gladly availing themselves of British assistance and being ready enough to be annexed to Great Britain in a time of danger, changed their minds and became the easy dupes of interested agitators when the danger was past, their enemies destroyed, and when they were required to conform to that system of law and order to which they had so much objection, and to pay the taxes necessary to support that system.

Truth-loving Englishmen may judge between the two probabilities, but how is it that our Government has sided with the rebels and believed their statements rather than those of British officials and loyal British subjects? The reason is not far to seek. Unhappily, the democratic element which prevails in our present Government does not seek to *lead* public opinion to what is *right*, but to *follow* public opinion to what is *popular*. And so, just as in Ireland ministers refrained from that vigour of action in September or October last year which would in all probability have saved many lives and prevented much outrage in that unhappy country, because they waited until public opinion should be matured to support them, or, in other words, until the Radical section of their followers should be so alarmed by Irish agitation as to be ready for "strong measures," so, with regard to the Transvaal, they believed they had a clue to the direction of public opinion, and shaped their policy accordingly. A noisy section of "advanced Liberals"—Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Passmore-Edwards, of the *Echo*, and some others of the same stamp—set themselves to stir up an agitation in favour of restoring the Transvaal to the Boers. Public meetings were held, strong language used, the independence and patriotism of the Boers extolled to the skies, and the vindication of Her Majesty's authority in the Transvaal by her troops stigmatised as an unjust and unholy war. Forgetful of the fact

that in such a question counter-demonstrations were unlikely, because true Englishmen and loyal subjects, never doubting that the Government would stand to the words placed in the mouth of the Sovereign, and make the re-establishment of her authority the essential precursor of any peace, did not deem it necessary to raise an agitation in support of those principles of loyalty to which the Government were pledged, Her Majesty's Ministers seem to have come to the unhappy and mistaken conclusion that the voices of a few miserable demagogues expressed the real feeling of the people of Great Britain, and that the disciples of "peace at any price" had really the command of popular opinion.

A few words will suffice to show the melancholy results of this Ministerial delusion. The rebellion began by a refusal to pay taxes and the proclamation of the rebel Triumvirate that they had assumed government at Heidelberg. *Let Englishmen well note the next event.* Col. Anstruther, with a detachment of the 94th Regiment, with baggage, women, and children, was marching, as in time of peace, from Middleburgh to Pretoria upon the 20th Dec., 1880. No war had been declared, no attack was expected, when suddenly scouts appeared, and a man bearing a white flag rode up to Col. Anstruther and delivered him a letter signed by the Boer Triumvirate, Kruger, Pretorius, and Joubert, saying that they "wished him to stop where he was." To prove that what followed was no fair warlike engagement, it is only necessary to quote the words of this letter, which stated that a "Diplomatic Commissioner" had been sent to the British Governor, Sir O. Lanyon, and "until the arrival of His Excellency's answer, we do not know whether we are in a state of war or not." Col. Anstruther replied that he had orders to march to Pretoria, which he must obey, but that he had "no wish to meet the Boers hostilely," and asked the messenger to "take his message to the Boer Commandant-General and let him know the result, to which he nodded assent." But, whilst Col. Anstruther was reading this letter, the Boers, *taking advantage of the flag of truce, were quietly circling round, and taking up positions from which they had already marked and measured the distances by stones, thus showing that they had planned and carried out a murderous ambuscade.* "Almost immediately the enemy's line advanced," and our poor English soldiers, completely taken by surprise, were shot down before they had time to form; every officer but one was picked off at the first volley, and 157 men killed and wounded out of a total force of under 250. Unarmed servants of officers were shot dead in cold blood, and one woman was seriously wounded. Never in the annals of warfare was perpetrated a more cruel and cold-blooded massacre, indefensible either by the rules of warfare or any code of laws in existence among civilised communities. What, then, was the duty of the British Government? Clearly, before any peace was made with the insurgent Boers, to demand a full reparation, so far as reparation

could be made, for this terrible outrage, and a surrender of those by whose orders it had been committed. Will Englishmen believe that, instead of taking this course, Her Majesty's Government have apparently treated the incident as one of ordinary warfare, and that in all Lord Kimberley's despatches hitherto laid before Parliament there occurs not only no protest, no remonstrance, no indignation at the "massacre of Bronker's Sprut," but not even a word of regret for the brave soldiers so foully and wantonly murdered? Up to this time, British soldiers, fighting in a foreign land, have known and felt that they have the sympathy of their country with them, and that if they fall by treachery or foul practices they will not fall unavenged. It has been reserved for the present Government to teach them a different lesson, but it is one which the true heart of the people of England can still unteach.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the subsequent incidents of this brief and inglorious struggle. Mr. Sellar tells us that the eyes of the Government "were *rudely opened by the disaster at Laing's Nek*," and that *then* they became aware that everybody had been deceived, and that "the annexation was not acquiesced in by the inhabitants." Was ever such a proposition penned by human hand or submitted to the credulity of human understanding? If it be worth anything, it must be equally true and just to assert that if "the disaster" at Laing's Nek had been a victory, Government would have discovered that everybody had been delighted with the annexation and that all official information had been correct?

Judging by the light of subsequent events, there can be little doubt that Sir George Colley committed an error in advancing upon the Transvaal with an inadequate force, and subsequently in yielding to the belief that a small number of Englishmen could accomplish more than it was possible for human prowess to effect in the teeth of an enemy superior in numbers and in a strong position. But, be this as it may, Sir George Colley has atoned for any mistake by dying a soldier's death, with his face to the enemy, and the question which Englishmen have to ask themselves is this: how and why should the disaster of a general and the defeat of the detachments of an army affect the policy of a Government? If we were wrong in annexing the Transvaal, we were wrong long before the rebellion broke out, and a temporary success of rebels should not have altered the matter. If, on the other hand, we were right, that right was in no way affected by a temporary disaster to our troops. The advocates of the Boers, however, and the friends of the Government (alas! that they should be identical) claim "moral courage" for this "justice-loving" Government in their abandonment to rebels of the country in which they had solemnly declared that the Queen's authority must be re-established. Mr. Chamberlain, moreover, has the effrontery to talk of the course taken by Great Britain having been "a course of oppression and wrong-doing" in which the present Government would not persist, and appeals to public

opinion to approve " the action of the Government, in preferring justice to revenge, and the best interests of South Africa to the vain pursuit of military glory." This idle declamation of course begs the whole question. No right-thinking man desires " military glory " for glory's sake, but a salutary chastisement of the rebel Boers was necessary for the upholding of that power and reputation of Great Britain which the " best interests of Africa " so much require. When you are dealing with savage and with semi-civilised races, it is necessary to appeal to feelings which they understand and appreciate, and all the " tall talk " of all the Chamberlains that ever charmed a Birmingham audience with high-flown eloquence will not come home to the minds of the Boers or of the native tribes with the same power of persuasion as the display of physical force and the proved determination of Great Britain to be supreme in South Africa. The Government actually allowed an armistice, during which, while the British troops were to remain within their camp, the rebels were permitted to remain upon British territory which they had invaded. It appeared as if the honour of the British flag, the safety of the loyal Colonists, the prestige of the British name were all as nothing to the Administration, so that they could please the advocates of " peace at any price," and put a stop to the expenditure in which they were involved by the war. Mr. Sellar tells us that there can be no doubt that Sir Evelyn Wood, at the head of 12,000 British troops, could have subjugated the Boers. But do the Boers think so? In a letter to Mankorana, a native chief, warning him not to aid the British, the acting Commandant-General of the Boers speaks of " our enemies the English Government, which we have already overthrown," and says, moreover, " we alone are able to work out the English." The plea of " moral courage " may be understood by men of education and refinement, but to the natives and Boers the change of front of the British Government seems only to have been dictated by the fear of further disasters, a fear expressed with tolerable clearness by Lord Kimberley in the debate recently brought on by Lord Cairns, when he hinted at the possible danger to our troops of an attack upon their flank by Free State Boers, who might take part against us if we continued the war.

What, then, is the position of affairs in South Africa at the present moment, and what the prospects of the future? All is dark indeed. To be an Englishman, to have been loyal, to have believed in the word of the British Government—these are deep misfortunes to any man. Englishmen and loyal Boers have lost relations, lands, and property, and their chance of obtaining restitution or compensation may be judged of by the past behaviour of the Government. British officials will be disbelieved, British evidence discredited, and the Boers allowed to have it all their own way. Then, Lord Kimberley, in his instructions to the Commission now sitting to arrange for the future of the Transvaal, suggests the taking off a slice of

territory to interpose a barrier between the Boers and the Zulus and Swazis. Does anybody believe that this, which would deprive the Boers of some of the most fertile portions of the country and of access to the sea, will be permitted by them? And if objected to, does anyone believe that Government will insist upon it? There will be more "moral courage" evinced by further yielding to the Boers. But what of the native tribes? Already comes the news of great irritation amongst them, and threats that they, *who were unanimously in favour of annexation to England*, will never again submit to the dominion of the hated Boers. If there should be a native uprising, and a war of races should come, who will be responsible but Her Majesty's Government? and what will the interests of South Africa have gained? It was for the sake of those interests that the Transvaal was annexed to England; it was for the sake of those interests that Cetewayo was dethroned and imprisoned. If it be "justice" to give back the Transvaal to the Boers, why not give back Zululand to Cetewayo? Nay, if the "majority of the people" at any given moment ought in justice to possess the country they live in, how can Mr. Gladstone shrink from evincing his "moral courage" by giving up Ireland to the Home Rulers and Land League, who claim, at least, to constitute the "majority" in a country which has been declared to have been recently "within a measureable distance" of a state of things similar to that which has occurred in the Transvaal? For the sake of pleasing the Democratic section of their party, the Government must stand convicted of having, in this matter of the Transvaal, imperilled British honour and British interests: they have no more information now of the real feeling in the Transvaal than they had when they declared that the Queen's authority should be re-established; they only know that a force of Boers, whose number has never yet been ascertained (but who were undoubtedly aided by other Boers than those of the Transvaal proper), occupied strong positions and thrice defeated small detachments of British troops; they do not know how many loyal Boers were forced either to join the ranks of the rebels or to remain quiet; they know that the loyalists in the towns held their own, and could have done so for weeks longer; but they have taken for granted all that could lead them to agree with the doctrines propounded in Mr. Gladstone's Mid-Lothian speeches, and in the pursuit of peace they have forgotten the faith pledged to the loyal inhabitants, upon whom they have committed a cruel injustice in the name of justice, and by again leaving the native tribes face to face with the slave-loving Boers, have in all probability done that which will once more plunge the Transvaal into anarchy and confusion, and is but too likely to lead to an effusion of blood and a conflict of races which the firm hand of a patriotic Government might happily have averted.

Having written the above statement, every word of which I conscientiously believe to be true, I cannot refuse to subscribe my

name to the same. It is with deep regret that I attack the policy of men with whom I have fought side by side in political warfare for more than a quarter of a century, of whose good intentions I am as confident as I am of my own, and for many of whom I have a personal regard. But I have no alternative. The Colonial Empire of Great Britain is, to my mind, of far greater importance than party ties or personal considerations, and I feel strongly that the very existence of that empire is imperilled by the policy of the present Government. By the course which has been taken in South Africa, loyal colonists have been taught, for the first time in our history, that engagements entered into by one Government and ratified by Parliament are not binding upon a succeeding Government and Parliament; that the solemn assurances of British officials of high rank are to count for nothing when it suits the convenience of the moment to disregard them; that the treacherous massacre of British soldiers may be suffered to pass unavenged and almost unnoticed; and that the temporary success of rebels condones rebellion and justifies concession to their demands. These are hard lessons for Englishmen, whether at home or abroad, to learn and to digest. For my part, I can do neither the one nor the other, and as the policy which teaches them has been defended and extolled as something noble and magnanimous, I desire to place before my fellow-countrymen my reasons for believing it to be the reverse and opposite.

BRABOURNE.

3, Queen Anne's Gate, July 1, 1881.